

# Evening Bulletin

With which is Incorporated the "Independent."

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HONOLULU, H. I., SATURDAY, AUGUST 24, 1895.

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## THE Evening Bulletin

With which is incorporated the INDEPENDENT.

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## GOOD OLD DAYS OF YORE.

When Taxes Were Payable With Swine.

AND ARROWROOT, COTTON AND SUGAR WERE ACCEPTABLE.

A Chapter on the Duties of Women and Another on Police Constables.

Much interesting reading, as well as much information as to the laws and customs which prevailed in the Hawaiian Islands from fifty to sixty years ago, may be obtained by carefully perusing the pages of what is known as the Hawaiian Blue Book, which contains the first printed translation of the old laws in existence previous to the meeting of the first legislature in 1845. This little book was printed at Lahainaluna, on the island of Maui, in 1842.

In his preface to the book the translator says most of the laws were of quite recent date, some of them being enacted, however, as far back as 1833, while others had their origin as early as 1823. The system of common law consisted partly in ancient taboos and partly in the practices of the celebrated chiefs as handed down by tradition, but in 1842 the principles of the Bible were fully adopted. Some of the laws contained in the volume were first proposed by foreign visitors and commanders of vessels of war, some were proposed by foreign residents and consuls. Several of the original laws were written by David Malo; nearly all the laws on the subject of taxation were written by Boaz Mahune and the first drafts of others by Timothy Keaweiki, Daniel Ii and others.

The first two chapters of this interesting little book are devoted to the Constitution and declaration of rights of the people and chiefs, promulgated by Kamehameha III., and the act creating the House of Nobles and the manner of electing the seven representatives who were graciously permitted to sit with them.

The third chapter deals with the important subject of taxation, then as now one of the highest consideration. Taxes were of three kinds, poll, labor and land. That portion respecting poll tax reads as follows:

### RESPECTING THE POLL TAX.

There shall be two forms of taxation in the Hawaiian Kingdom. The one of a poll tax to be paid in money, and the other a land tax to be paid in swine; or these shall be the standard of taxation, though in failure of these articles, other property will be received. The amount of poll tax shall be as follows:

For a Man, one dollar.  
For a Woman, half a dollar.  
For a Boy, one fourth of a dollar.  
For a Girl, one eighth of a dollar.

This is the ratio of taxation for adults and children above 14 years of age. But feeble old men and women shall not be taxed at all. In the back part of the islands where money is difficult to be obtained Arrow root will be a suitable substitute. Thirty-three pounds of good arrow root will be taken for a dollar. Cotton also is another suitable article, sixteen pounds will be accounted equal to a dollar. Sugar is another suitable article, also nets. If any individual do not obtain the money at the time when every man is to pay his taxes, and if he do not obtain arrow root, nor sugar, nor nets until the specified months for payment are passed, viz. October, November and December, then every man shall be fined the value of two dollars (if his tax is not paid) and the same rates of increase shall be observed in relation to those whose taxes are less than that of a man. The fine shall be paid in some property that can be sold for the value of two dollars, but not in property subject to immediate decay or death.

### THE LAND TAX.

This was payable in swine at the following rates for each plan-

tation, but it is expressly provided that there should be no state, county, town or district tax:

A large farm—a swine one fathom long.

A smaller one—a swine three cubits long.

A very small one—a swine one yard long.

If not a fathom swine, then 10 dollars.

If not a three cubit swine, then 7½ dollars.

If not a yard swine, then 5 dollars.

Failure to pay this tax resulted in the person at fault being dispossessed of the land, which was then given to some one else. For the purpose of clearness and equality in taxation it was provided in case of disagreement between the tax officer and the owner of the swine as to its size that it should be weighed at the following standard: a fathom swine to be considered as weighing 333 pounds, a three-cubit swine 250 pounds and a yard swine 167 pounds.

### OF THE LABOR TAX.

This portion of the tax law evidently took the place of an older one, for it prescribes that hereafter a tax in labor shall not be required on every week in the month. It provides that on two weeks labor shall be done for His Majesty the King and also the landlords, and two weeks the people shall have wholly to themselves. The first week in the month the people shall work two days for the King and one for the landlords; the second week in the month they shall work one day for His Majesty the King, and two days for the landlords, and the next two weeks the people shall have to themselves. Those who did not go to the public labor of the King and landlords were fined a half a dollar a day. If a man was late in the morning he was fined one eighth of a dollar, or a rial as it was called in those days, and if he did not show up until dinner time he was fined 25 cents. If the fine accrued on the King's day it was payable to him, but if on the landlord's day the latter got the benefit of it. There were two seasons of rest on labor days, one for breakfast and the other for dinner. If one remained idle while the rest were at work his fine was two days' work at some other labor. Only really idle and lazy people were fined.

Provisions were also made for parents with numerous families and the infirm, in the shape of a reduction in the amount of labor and also in the money tax.

### RESPECTING IDLERS.

They had no use for idlers in those days as the following extract will show: "As for the idler, let the industrious put him to shame and sound his name from one end of the country to the other. And even if they should withhold food on account of his idleness, there shall be no condemnation for those who thus treat idlers. If a landlord or a chief should give entertainment to such a sluggard, he would thereby bring shame on the industrious. For three months the tenants of him who thus entertains the sluggard shall be freed from labor for their landlord. Such is the punishment of him who befriends the sluggard. Let him obtain his food by labor.

In another page the following appears: "And here is a word of advice for industrious landholders, tenants, sub-tenants, servants of chiefs, persons having no land, and vagrants. According to this book it is best to have one, and one only fixed business, and to engage in it with high hopes in Him who aids us by the rain from

Heaven. Such a course would be a benefit to all who live and labor in our kingdom."

### THE BUSINESS OF FEMALES.

A special section is devoted to females, and their business is defined in the following terms:

"This is the appropriate business of all the females of these islands; to teach the children to read, cipher and write, and other branches of learning, to subject the children to good parental and school laws, to guide the children to right behavior, and place them in schools, that they may do better than their parents. But if the parents do not understand reading, then let them commit the instruction of their children to those who do understand it, and let the parents support the teacher; inasmuch as they feel an interest in their children, let them feel an interest in the teacher too. But if any woman do not conduct according to the requirements of this section, then let her return to the labor of her landlord as in former times, to such labor, however, as is appropriate to women. The tax officers will look to and manage this business."

### CHIEFS AND LANDLORDS.

The business of the chiefs and landlords is laid down in these words:

"Ye chiefs of the nation, reflect well on these fundamental laws of the kingdom. From this time change your course of procedure. A change in accordance with this law will be both more just and be really better for yourselves. The multitude of people who live with us in idleness, or do but little, which we falsely supposed to be a business style of living, let that cease."

"Reflect well, all ye landlords of the Kingdom, on all the regulations of this law, lest you be dispossessed, according to the principles of the eleventh section. Search for your wealth on your own labor days, search out such kind of business as will enrich the country and those tenants who live upon the lands under you, that the high and the low may be under the like subjection to the same laws enacted by the chiefs for the protection of the kingdom."

### POLICE OFFICERS AND CONSTABLES.

One of the earliest laws promulgated was that relating to police officers and their duties. It was passed at a Council of the Nobles held at Lahaina, Maui, on the 10th of November, 1840, and went into effect on the first of January, 1841. It specified that the governors of the islands shall appoint constables for the protection of the people and villages and provides that they shall wear a badge, which shall be a little stick, with the name of the king at the top of it. Constables were given one fourth of the fines levied, and if they received a bribe from any arrested party they were fined four times the amount of the bribe.

Would space permit much more might be written on this interesting subject.

GEORGE MANSON.

### They Got Left.

The following had engaged passage by the Monowai in addition to those mentioned in these columns a few days since: H M Mott-Smith, C A Marshall, C H Ball, B W Porter, Mrs Dr Wood and child, H Markey, Wm Hoogs, P A Mosher and D G Camarinos.

Mr. Robertson had occasion to consult a volume of English chancery reports in the Law Library, and found its pages sealed with the great seal of a wasp's mud house on its front edge. Perhaps the yellow jacket "built better than it knew" this time.

The Christian church on Alakea street will not be ready for occupancy yet awhile, a report in a contemporary that it would be opened tomorrow to the contrary notwithstanding. The glass for the windows has not yet arrived from San Francisco. It is turning out to be a tasteful looking edifice.